

REMARKS

The Office action of January 25, 2008, has been carefully considered.

The specification has been amended to add proper subject matter headings and to remove references to specific claims.

Claims 1-4 and 11-16 have been rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite on several grounds. These claims have now been rewritten as new Claims 17 through 31, in proper form for U.S. practice, and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claims 1-8 and 10-15 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Borneuf.

Claim 17 is directed to a ski including a kick-enhancing covering, the ski comprising an upper surface having a portion to which the ski boot is to be fastened and an underside surface including a kick zone opposite to the portion to which the boot is to be fastened, and extending slightly in front of and slightly behind the portion to which the ski boot is fastened. This arrangement is disclosed in the paragraph bridging pages 4 and 5 of the specification.

The ski further comprises a recess in the underside surface forward of the kick zone, a fixing plate disposed in the recess and secured in the forward portion thereof, and a band or strip equipped with skin, ski wax or a waxless kick-enhancing covering *limited to the kick zone*. The band or strip extends forward and is retained in the recess between a rearward portion of the fixing plate and the underside surface of the ski.

Claim 20 is directed to a device for fixing the ski a band or strip equipped with a kick-enhancing covering which comprises an engagement block mountable in the ski comprising a top portion, at least one housing portion which has at least one engaging hole therethrough and a retaining piece with at

least one lug insertable into the engaging hole to receive and form retaining engagement with the housing portion. The retaining piece includes means for fastening a forward portion of the band or strip thereto.

Claim 26 is directed to a combination of the kick-enhancing band or strip for mounting on a ski and fixing device comprising a fixing plate on the underside of the ski, fixing hole through the ski or an engagement block.

The Borneuf reference is directed to what is known in the art as a "Randonne" ski, which is similar to a cross country ski, but shorter and having a substantially larger width. Randonne skis enable skiing up and down hills, and are traditionally supplied with boots and ski supports which are called sealskins, but which are today, however, synthetic. In the Borneuf ski, the skin is attached to a carrier or "fixing plate" which can be used on both sides of the ski, and the ski is covered completely with the skin, the covering being complete in both length and width. The band 5 found in Figure 3 of Borneuf is actually a sole and not a skin, while numeral 5 in Figure 3 represents a support plate.

According to the invention, it is very important that the skin can be attached to the ski and removed very quickly and that the mechanism not allow snow and ice to accumulate and impair the function of the ski, properties made possible by the limitation of the skin to the kick zone, and the claimed means of attachment. The structure disclosed by Borneuf does not make this possible.

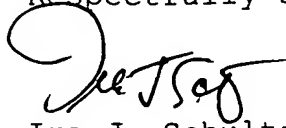
Withdrawal of this rejection is accordingly requested.

Claims 9 and 16 have been found to be allowable over the art.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. An early allowance of the

application with amended claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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